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### Recommended Citation

Weinstein, Mark D., ""Start Talking!" Initiative Brings Kasich, Pharmacy Students Together on Campaign to End Drug Abuse" (2016). *News Releases*. 315.  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**September 12, 2016**

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## **"Start Talking!" Initiative Brings Kasich, Pharmacy Students Together on Campaign to End Drug Abuse**

**CEDARVILLE, OHIO** – Three professors and 23 Cedarville University pharmacy students will be recognized for their involvement in Gov. John Kasich's "Start Talking!" drug-free initiative Tuesday, Sept. 13, at the Governor's Residence and Heritage Garden in Columbus.

The initiative was created by Kasich and first lady Karen Kasich in an effort to prevent drug abuse. The Governor's Office of Faith Based Community Initiatives collaborated with Cedarville's School of Pharmacy to create and develop a scriptural drug abuse program on the dangers of substance abuse that can be an educational resource to churches throughout Ohio. The program developed will be used in presentations, brochures and other literature.

"The goal of this initiative was to provide much needed education to those looking for help and seeking hope," said Thad Franz, Pharm.D., vice chair of experiential programs and assistant professor of pharmacy practice at Cedarville University. "Drug abuse in Ohio feels like a losing battle at times, but with proper education and caring communities coming together, I believe progress can be made. Thanks to Gov. Kasich, Cedarville's School of Pharmacy can be part of the solution."

"I'm very excited to see our students recognized for their hard work," said Aleda Chen, Pharm.D., Ph.D., assistant dean and assistant professor of pharmacy practice. "It is a blessing to be able to engage with the students and positively impact communities."

Lauren Bluhm, who is in her fourth professional year in the pharmacy program, directed Cedarville's involvement in the initiative and was more than pleased with the results.

"We were just so excited to do something for God's glory and really strive to show who He is through our work with addiction and drugs in society," said Bluhm. She also recognized how this initiative impacted the pharmacy students.

"[This program] helped shed light on every encounter I have with a patient now — mentally, physically and spiritually," said Bluhm. "We are now better equipped to help others through counseling. It's cool to see how God is growing the students through this initiative."

The program helped students and professors identify and address community needs and better serve the surrounding community.

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 3,760 undergraduate, graduate, and online students in more than 100 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings, and leading student satisfaction ratings. For more information about the University, visit [www.cedarville.edu](http://www.cedarville.edu).